

Revelation Seminar - Session 2 @ Tenth

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[0 : 00] Now, may I just speak a pastoral word to you, an encouraging word. Don't be discouraged if you don't get all this all at once.

It takes a while to really move into and understand what is happening in this last book of the Bible. It can feel obscure, trust me.

You'll go up and down. There are times when you'll hit something and then it becomes obscure again. But it's not meant to be obscure. It's not meant to be esoteric. Jesus really wants us to understand what's going on and so he gives this to us.

So be encouraged. I did not start preaching on this book until I had spent 25 years studying it. I just didn't think I could.

And I have so much more to learn. So we just go along and do the best we can. Now, Wayne, during the break, gave me a good piece of advice on number four.

[1 : 05] John is describing the symbols that he saw, not the underlying reality behind the symbols. I thought that was a good phrase, underlying reality behind the symbols.

That's another way you could put that one. All right. Here we go. 6.0. The principle in number three, where I learned that we don't learn any new truth, but we learn it in a new way, was very revolutionary to me.

This next one was even more revolutionary. 6.0. The question to ask as we read through the book is not what happens next, but what did John see next?

6.0. 6.0. 7.8. 7.1. 7.1. 8.2. 8.0. 8.4. 9.1. 9.1. 8.18. 9.1. 9.2.

9.2. 9.2. 10.1.

[2 : 13] 12.1. 10.1. 10.1. Poll Christian. 11.1. 40 times. He uses the verb SEE. So what you're supposed to do is imagine in this house church or house churches, somebody gets this scroll and they begin to read it out loud.

And people are going, what did he see next? What did he see next? Not what happened next, what happened next? So what did John see next? What did he see next? So Paul Spillsbury puts it really well.

Paul Spillsbury is a member of the 10th community and is going to be preaching one of the sermons in the series for 10th. And he has a very good book. The Throne, the Lamb, and the Dragon. The Throne, the Lamb, and the Dragon, a reader's guide to the book of Revelation.

And if you've heard Paul teach, you know he's a very, very fine teacher. He's now the dean at Regent College. But Paul Spillsbury says, the scenes are not given in chronological order.

They're given in the order in which John saw them. The book, now quoting him, does not unfold in a straightforward sequential way. Many times the action of the visions takes us back over territory we've already covered, introducing new information, changing perspectives, and surprising twist of plot.

- [3 : 31] So, we have the verbs see and saw throughout the book. 1-2, he bore witness to all he saw.
- 1-11, write in the book what you see. 1-12, I saw seven golden lampstands. 1-17, and when I saw him. 1-20, the seven stars which you saw in my right hand.
- 4-1, I looked and behold, I saw, I saw, I saw 40 times. 1-21, now let me give you an example of this that will, I think, help you appreciate what we're getting at.
- Let's read Revelation 12, 1-12. You turn there. This turns out to be the center of the book. I'll explain what center of the book means in a moment too.
- It actually begins at 1-19. You know that the chapter divisions and verse numbers are not inspired. Those weren't given by the Holy Spirit, you know that.
- [4 : 29] Somebody came along and tried to help us and put that. This is where I wish the person had started chapter 12 at 11-19. Because it has this verb open. And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened.
- The ark of his covenant appeared in his temple. That means we're right in the really thick of it, the middle of it. There were flashes of lightning, sounds, peals of thunder, and an earthquake and great hailstorm.
- And a great sign appeared in heaven. A woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars. And she was with child.
- And she cried out, being in labor and in pain, to give birth. Another sign appeared in heaven. And behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his head were seven diadems.
- His tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, she might devour her child.
- [5 : 30] He might devour her child. She gave birth to a son, a male son, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for 1,260 days.
- And there was war in heaven, Michael and the angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war. And they were not strong enough, praise the Lord. There was no longer any place found for them in heaven.
- And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth. And his angels were thrown down with him.
- And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come. For the accuser of the brethren has been thrown down, who accused them before our God day and night.
- And they overcame him because of the blood of the lamb and because of the word of their testimony. And they did not love their life even to death. Rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them.
- [6 : 40] Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time. Praise God, only a short time.
- All right, let's go back and look at this a little more carefully. This is a really interesting and tough section. Chapter 12, verse 1. A great sign appeared in the heaven, a woman clothed with sun, the moon under her feet, on her head a crown of 12 stars.
- Okay, that's what John saw. Now, what's the reality behind that symbol? Who is this woman? And how would you determine it?

You'd look for some Old Testament reference. So, anybody clicking in as you run the video of the Old Testament through your head?

Any place that would give you a clue who this is? There's a man who had a dream. He was the dreamer in the Old Testament.

[7 : 45] His name was Joseph. He has a dream of sun and moon, his father and mother, and the 12 tribes.

So, who's this woman? Israel. And, this would be, we'll be able to talk about later, a symbol then of the people of God.

And when you read this story, the people of God continually get focused, focused, focused into a faithful remnant who is finally Mary of Nazareth.

She now is the remnant of Israel, the faithful one who's left. She gives birth to a child.

Well, that's the role of Israel in the world, to bring Messiah into the world. Chief role of it. Would you agree? You will be a blessing to the whole world, and you're a blessing to the whole world, because the seed of the woman is going to be born, who is Messiah.

[8 : 56] So, this child that is born, verse 5, is Messiah, is Jesus Christ. She gave birth to a male son who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.

Does anybody know what that would be referring to? Anybody get a clue of that? It's in a psalm. It's the psalm that's quoted most in the New Testament.

20. 20. Okay, the Lord's my shepherd with his rod. Very good. That's a good connection. Because actually, there's a variant on this.

He will rule the nations with a rod of iron. It's actually, some people, some of the early versions have, he will shepherd the people with a rod of iron. So, Psalm 23 behind that.

Very good. There's one other psalm. Two. Very good. But, Psalm 2. I think the book of Revelation is a Christian commentary on Psalm 2. Psalm 2.

[9 : 55] Why are the nations raging and the people devising a vain thing? And what is the vain thing? Let's throw off the fetters of Yahweh and his Messiah. We don't want God's Torah.

We don't want the law. We don't want any outside interference in our understanding of morality. Very contemporary. But God says, it's a vain thing to do. Then God says, I have set my king on Zion, my holy mountain.

And then the king speaks back to God and says, he said to me, you are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations as your inheritance and you will rule them with a rod of iron.

So, clearly, the child then is Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is born to be the king. All right? Are you following? Okay.

When was... Okay. Now, then, verse 3, another sign appeared in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon. And who is the great red dragon symbolizing? Satan.

[10 : 57] And the rest of the text explains that to us. Okay. So, picture. This woman is giving birth. She's representing Israel slash people of God slash Mary.

She's giving birth to a child. When the child is born, the dragon starts to come after him. When did chapter 12 take place?

Christmas Eve. This event takes place at Christmas. He's born, Matthew 1. Then, the magi come because, see, he's born to rule the kings of the world.

They're already coming. Herod is threatening out the kazoo. And what does he do? He orders the massacre of the children because he's got to kill this child.

So, Revelation chapter 12 is describing an event that happened long before John was on Patmos.

[12 : 09] Are you following me? So, you don't ask what happened next. Because if you're reading through 1 to 11, asking what's happened next, and you go to chapter 12, what happened next? The answer is, like long ago.

Let's say John is in 96 AD. This is way back there, the turn of that century. Long ago it happened. And now it's being brought into this picture.

Okay? So, that's, that's, you have to be careful to ask then, what did he see next? Now, this leads to 6.4 then, a concept to keep in mind in reading this book.

It's so-called recapitulation. We're not moving through these events sequentially, one after another, but we're going through similar events again and again and again.

There are three great openings when Jesus, the Lamb, opens the scroll of history, takes the seals off. There are the seals, then there are trumpets, and then there are bowls.

[13 : 09] We're not supposed to read that as though there are 21 events. Seven seals, then seven trumpets, then seven bowls.

We're not even supposed to read them as though they're seals 1, 2, 3, 4, and then we get trumpets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Trumpet 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Not that.

But you have seals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, there's an interlude, 7. Start over again. Trumpets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, interlude, 7.

Start over again. Bulls 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, interlude, 6, 7, and there's an interlude. So we're going around the same unfolding reality three different times.

This is where you wonder what the peals of thunder were about. Does that make sense? Because if you read it like a newspaper, you'd think there are 21 events to happen.

[14 : 09] No, no, no, no, no, no, no. It doesn't work that way. So you're looking at the same reality in three ways. So a lot of people say that the analogy for the book of Revelation is a spiral staircase.

You start, you're going around this pole. You go around and you understand it one way. Then you go another way and you see it from another perspective now because you're going higher or lower. And then you go one more time.

If you do that too many times, you get dizzy. Now, the seals, you're going around unfolding of history.

In the seals, you're looking from the perspective of the church under persecution. In the trumpets, you're looking at it from the perspective of the world under judgment.

Same events. The church responds one way. The world responds another way. And then the bulls, you're looking at it from the perspective of heaven.

[15 : 15] And that's why they look different, even though if you've read through it, you know they're very similar events. That's because what John writes next is not necessarily what happens next.

It's what he sees next. So Jesus showed him the seven seals. Window disappears. Seven trumpets. Seven bulls. But it was the same kind of historical reality being seen from different perspectives.

Okay? This then, 6.5, explains why we seem to come up to the end so many times only to start over again.

So, for instance, you've got the seven seals. The seventh seal in chapter 8, verses 1 to 2, is a great dramatic moment. There's silence in heaven.

Boy, I mean, that's powerful. Because in chapter 4, it says that day and night they do not cease singing, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, for millennia. And then there comes a great moment when there's just silence.

[16 : 28] That has a sense of a dramatic end, doesn't it? And what happens in that silence? All this incense comes up, and John is told this incense symbolizes the prayers of the people of God.

And it says that God gathered up all the prayers of the people of God from all of the ages, and they're all gathered up into the presence of God in this silence. Perfect time to end the book.

Nope. Got to go around again. So you go through the trumpets. And then you get to 11, 15 to 18.

And the song they're singing, the song of Moses and the Lamb, we give thanks to you, O Lord God the Almighty, who are and who was, but know who is to come.

Because you've reached the end. He is not to come. He's now come. And that's why, in verse 15 of chapter 11, you've got the so-called hallelujah chorus. The kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, the kingdoms of this world, have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

[17 : 33] And he shall reign forever and ever. Great way to end the book. Nope. You got to go around again. Until you come to chapter 15. And now you've got these 144,000 who come off victorious.

They're on Mount Zion. This is where, sorry, the song of Moses and the Lamb is sung. And you think that's perfect time to end. No, you go around one more time. Because now you've got to hear the trumpets.

And then you come to 16, 21. It is done. And then you see the sudden collapse of Babylon. And then the Son of Man shows up on his horse.

And you see the coming of the new heavens and the new earth. So you go round and round and round and round and round. Okay? Number seven.

Controversial principle. So I'll just tell you right up front, this is controversial. But I think it's a decision each of us has to make as we read this book. The numbers in the book are symbols, not statistics.

[18 : 54] 7.1. We cannot treat some numbers as statistics and others as symbols. I don't think the text lets us go in that direction anywhere.

So either all the numbers are statistics or they're symbols. And that's the decision I think we have to make.

Chapter 5, verse 6. I saw a lamb with seven eyes and seven horns. Seven. Statistic or symbol? Hopefully so.

Right? Right? That's a symbol. The seven spirits of God. I think that's a symbol, not a statistic.

This is the literal interpretation of the last book of the Bible. Treating the numbers as symbols, not statistics. Now, I've listed for you some of the numbers.

[20 : 00] Two. Two. In Scripture, two is always the symbol of witness. Going to confirm something with two witnesses. And so you've got the picture of the two witnesses. I think it's in chapter 11.

Who are symbols of now the church, bearing witness under persecution. There are three woes. Four. Four is the number of completeness. It's the number of universal worldwide.

The four winds, the four corners of the earth, the four creatures. Seven, as I've already mentioned, is a number of completeness. Seven churches, seven angels, seven eyes, seven horns, seven seals.

The number seven as a complete number is probably due to Genesis 1. Seven days of creation. Ten. Did I type ten under the seven? Sorry.

I noticed that this morning. Ten. Ten is also a number of completeness. Ten commandments. Ten toes. Ten figures. Fingers. Twelve.

[20 : 58] Boy, all these numbers of completeness. Twelve is the number of? Twelve would be a picture of what? Okay. Twelve disciples and? Twelve tribes.

So twelve is going to be a picture of the complete people of God. And if you get two times twelve, twenty-four then, you're going to have a picture of the people of God before the Lamb is slain and people of God after the Lamb is slain.

That's why in chapter four you've got twenty-four thrones around the throne representing the people of God. Six, six, six. Statistic or symbol? It's a symbol.

I'm going to come back to that one in a moment. One thousand two hundred and sixty days, forty-two months, three and a half years. They're all the same span of time.

Statistic or symbol? It's a symbol. Now how do I know that? And where in the rest of Scripture would that help me understand that?

[22 : 03] Where? I didn't hear. Daniel. Daniel. Daniel. Okay. Yes. Daniel is referenced in there. Numbers. There are forty-two stages of Israel's wilderness journey.

This is a picture of the stages it takes for God to bring his people out of captivity to the promised land. So the symbol of one thousand two hundred and sixty, the forty-two, and the three and a half are all about that period of time it takes to get from being freed at the cross to coming into the new heaven and the new earth.

One thousand? One thousand? One thousand is ten times ten times ten. It's a way of saying a long time. Ten is a short time.

Ten times ten times ten times ten times ten times ten is really long.

It's a symbol, not a statistic. I just made a really powerful statement. You don't have to look at your calendar to figure out the thousand years.

[23 : 20] It's thousand years is not a statistic. It's a symbol. One thousand four hundred and forty-four. One thousand four. The number of people sealed.

Is that a statistic or a symbol? I better not. I hope it's not a statistic. You know we have some friends who believe it is a statistic and that's why they go out on Saturday morning knocking on your door.

They want to make sure they're included in the one hundred and forty-four thousand. I've got good news for them. One hundred and forty-four thousand. How does this number fall out? It's twelve times twelve, one hundred and forty-four.

That'd be a clear symbol. The people of God multiplied times ten. It's pretty big. Times ten again. It's really big. Times ten again.

It's like really big. So it's in chapter seven. One hundred and forty-four thousand are sealed. And then in the next half, which is typical of Revelation, he will see something and then he hears it.

[24 : 21] I saw the one hundred and forty-four thousand. And then I heard it was a number that nobody could number. Well, that fits.

One hundred and forty-four thousand is a way of saying the people of God is really, really, really, really big. Now, let me show you how this works in a more particular way.

In Revelation 21.16, John says he measures the new heaven and the new earth, the city, and it's twelve thousand stadia. I think some of your versions might have one thousand five hundred miles.

Anyone flip through there? Revelation 21.16, see what it does. I understand that because twelve stadia does translate into fifteen hundred miles. But John says stadia and he says twelve thousand.

Why? It's not a statistic. It's a symbol. I remember my dad one day wanted to calculate the size of the new heaven and the new earth. And he was working, what, one thousand five hundred miles.

[25 : 22] And actually, he figured out there's room for billions and billions of people in this. But at any rate, John is using that as a statistic. This city is so crafted. It's perfectly crafted.

It's twelve thousand stadia long and wide. It's the perfect size. Revelation 21.16, one hundred and forty-four cubits.

Some versions will have forty-two yards. No, you don't go to there. One hundred and forty-four. Statistic or symbol? It's a perfect symbol. Seven horse, seven eyes, I've already referred to that.

One hundred and four, and the one thousand, those are all symbols. Okay. All right. Does that make sense? Is that too controversial?

You can see where people get in trouble if they try to switch back and forth between statistic and symbol. Now, running through the whole book is the call to discipleship, expressed in various ways, and all pointing to loyalty under pressure.

[26 : 28] That's what I was saying about this flipside. To be in Jesus Christ is to be in this pressure. And what John is describing now in the rest of the book, it's the pressure to no longer be loyal to Jesus Christ when you come up against that which is against him.

Now, we know what that's like. For some people in the first century, that meant they came under persecution. The church in Smyrna and the church in Philadelphia.

For most of them, it was much more subtle. It was subtle pressure to find one's comfort and one's sense of security in wealth associated with the power of the empire.

Anybody know about that pressure? So the pressure that was coming on those people was to not remain loyal to Jesus Christ when issues of comfort and security began to arise.

And so the book is written to help us feel that tension and to help us realize he's going to give us perseverance to go through it. So I listed to you some of the vocabulary. Hupomene means to persevere.

[27 : 41] Tereo, to keep. Metanoio, to repent. Constant repentance. Krateo, to hold fast. And nekao, to overcome. And we find that word many times throughout the book.

And especially at 1211, which we read, they overcame. And the answer for that, do you remember what it is? How do they overcome?

1211. They overcame because of the blood of the lamb, because of the word of their testimony, and because they did not love their life even to death.

So the book is saying that the way we're going to be able to stand in this kingdom with Jesus against this pressure is we have to make the decision that I will do that even if it costs my life.

And from chapter 5 on, all that imagery is to impress on us this choice that we have. It's either going to go the way of Babylon, which at that day was Rome, but Babylon has many forms of it, or you go the way of the new Jerusalem.

[28 : 56] And that's a constant struggle. Now, the good news in all of that is in chapter 2, verse 23, Jesus says to the church of Thyatira, which I think is the key letter, I am he, the one who searches the minds and hearts.

I think that's Jesus' way of saying, I know where you live. I know this pressure. And I'm going to come close to you. I'm going to help you sort out when you're giving into idolatry.

And when you're tempted to commit adultery with another God. I know what that's like. I know who you are. I search your heart. And if you'll stay close to me, and if you'll listen four times, hear what the Spirit is saying, if you'll listen, I'll get you through this.

And you will be loyal to me. You will overcome. Okay? So, the last book of the Bible then is a discipleship document.

Matthew clearly is a discipleship document. Go make disciples of all the nations, teaching them to observe all I've commanded you. Matthew records all that Jesus did command. But this is also a discipleship document.

[30 : 05] We've heard all this before. But now we're going to feel it in a different way. So, 9.0. The most frequent command in the book, and therefore its major pastoral burden, is look.

Behold, lo. The second most frequent command is do not be afraid. And we obey the second by obeying the first. We obey the do not be afraid when we look.

Look. And I've listed for you many of the places where we have the look. Look. He's coming. Look. I'm alive forevermore. Look. I have the keys of death in Hades.

Look. The devil is about to be cast down. Look. I will cast her on a bed of sickness. Look. I've put before you an open door. Look. I stand at the door and knock. Look. A door open. Look.

A throne with someone sitting on it. Look. The lion is overcome. Look. A white horse. Look. A black horse. Look. An ashen horse. Look. A great. On and on it goes. Look. The great dragon. Look. The lamb is on Mount Zion with his 144,000.

[31 : 04] And then at the end, look. I am coming quickly. And John is saying, you just keep looking, looking, looking, looking, looking, looking, looking. You won't be as afraid. So the exhortation then is you don't look at what is surrounding us.

You don't look at our resources to meet what's surrounding us. You look at the great unseen reality of the present. You keep looking at Jesus Christ. And right now in our time, that's what we have to keep doing.

I know many people living very frightened lives right now. And bless their heart, the media just keeps nurturing that because that's what sells. They're not going to tell the good news.

When was the last time CNN says, oh, Jesus Christ is king of the, Lord of the kings of the earth. You're going to have to get it from some other source. And this book keeps telling you that.

All right. Now. Now we're going to get into a little more technical. I'm going to show you how the book starts to go together. The whole vision. And you could look at that chiastic structure I gave you.

[32 : 12] I'm going to come back and explain this in a moment. But you'll notice here. Take this piece of paper out. All right. Prologue and epilogue.

I want to show you something that's in common with these two things. And this is pretty typical of most of the New Testament writing. The New Testament author will start at a place.

Listen carefully where they start. Because more often than not, they're going to come back to that at the end. It's called enveloping. A document will start somewhere and then come around to the end as a way to package it and to remind you of what was said at the beginning.

So, this whole vision is then bracketed by the prologue and the epilogue. And there are four affirmations that are going on in each of the prologue and epilogue.

Number one, coming. One seven, he is coming. Two seven, I am coming. Two twelve, I am coming. Two twenty, I'm coming.

[33 : 18] By the way, it's always present, not future. I am coming, meaning that he's even now in process of coming. I'm coming. The second thing that's common to both the prologue and the epilogue, near.

The time is near. Now, that's echoing the Mark 1.15 of Jesus. The time is fulfilled.

The kingdom of God has come near. This is what Paul will also echo in Philippians 4.4. The Lord is near. It's always near.

The coming of the kingdom is always near because the king is always near. The advent of the kingdom of God is always just right here because Jesus Christ the king is always just right here.

He's not far away. Either in time or space. And because he is near, the time is always near. And that's what the book's going to emphasize.

[34 : 22] The things which must take place. 1.1 and 22.6. The things which must take place. Must. In the sense of what?

When the kingdom of God comes up against any non-kingdom reality, there must be this tribulation. That's what he's emphasizing on the must.

It's not like a script that has to be fulfilled. It's the turmoil. It's the turmoil. This unsettling of the status quo. It must take place. A way to translate the word must is there is no other way.

It's just the way it is. As the kingdom of God breaks into the world, there's going to be this mustness of this tension. And then there are these I am sayings. This is powerful.

Walk this through carefully. The prologue ends with God saying, God the Father, I am the Alpha and the Omega. We read that earlier.

[35 : 21] So the prologue ends. The vision itself begins with Jesus saying, I am the first and the last. The vision, down in chapter 21 now, ends with God saying, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

The epilogue begins with Jesus saying, I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Do you see that? There are three phrases. I am the Alpha, the Omega. I am the first and the last. I am the beginning and the end. And they all come together out of the mouth of the crucified lamb.

I suggest to you, there is no higher Christological statement in all the Bible than right there. Those three phrases are only found together when they come out of the mouth of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. This is a phenomenon in the Bible called parallelism. You'll find it in Psalms a lot. And in a parallelism in the Bible, there's not simply a repetition.

[36 : 39] There's always an expansion. You say the first line, it expands to the second. Oh, I'll show you. It's Psalm 91, I believe.

Let's see if I got it right on a Saturday morning. Yeah. Psalm 91.

Listen to this parallelism. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Did you see the parallelism? Dwell, shelter, Most High. Abide, shadow, Almighty. It's not just, it's a parallel.

But it's an expansion. He who dwells, it's expanded to a more personal note of abiding. Shelter, now a more personal note of shadow.

- [37 : 47] The Most High, the Almighty, the one who's coming closer. Do you see that? So typical biblical parallelism is that it's not just a repetition, but an expansion.
- Oh my goodness. This is huge coming out of the mouth of Jesus. I am the Alpha and the Omega. Alpha is what?
- First letter of the Greek alphabet. Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. I am the Alpha and the Omega. Now I'm going to try to paraphrase Jesus.
- Forgive me, Lord, if I do this wrong. I'm the Alpha and the Omega. And he's saying to us, do you get it? Oh. Come up with any other list.
- And I'm the first. And I'm the last. That's further than alphabet. Whatever list you can come up with. I'm the first of it.
- [38 : 45] And I'm the last of it. So it's expanding. Then he says, I'm the beginning and the end. Now, this is where some Greek will bless you.
- Beginning is the word archa. Comes into the English language and archetype, archaeology. It does mean first in a series. But its primary meaning is the source of the series.
- Hence, archetype. John, in his gospel, will tell of a number of miracles. The first one is turning water into wine at Cana of Galilee. This is the first of his signs, says John.
- Yes, it's number one. But it's the source of all the other signs. All the other signs are going to look just like this one. And especially the great sign of his resurrection. Okay? So I am the archa.
- And I'm the telos. Telos doesn't simply mean last. It doesn't mean the end. It has its fundamental meaning is inherent destiny.
- [39 : 45] That's where we get the English word teleological. Those of you who are philosophers have had to talk about the teleological suspension of the ethical. In light of the end, you change the rules. Jesus Christ is the telos.
- Not just the omega. Not just the last. But the inherent destiny of it all. Do you see this? It's huge. So this whole book is wrapped around by that great affirmation.
- That Jesus Christ is the source of everything. Everything. In creation. And he is the inherent destiny of everything in creation.
- Now that's not just theoretical stuff. That is powerfully good news. Especially for me as a grandpa. I don't know that I'm going to get to see my grandchildren in their latter life.
- I'm not going to get to live that long. I know I won't get to. I won't. But I know something about every one of my grandkids. I know that Jesus Christ is the source of every one of those grandkids.
- [40 : 55] Yes? Yes? Preach it. Yes? Yes? They owe their existence to Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ brings things into being because there's an inherent destiny to what he brings into being.
- And those kids at the end of their life are going to find Jesus Christ. It's inevitable. I'm not teaching universalism there.
- Don't go down that road. I'm just giving you encouragement. That's what Jesus is saying. I'm the Alpha and the Omega. That's good. I'm the first and the last. That's really good. But I am the Arche and the Telos.
- And that's really good. And history is going to go my way. I'm going to win. Therefore, look and you won't be afraid.
- ISIS doesn't win. Because Hitler didn't win. Mussolini didn't win. Babylon didn't win. None of them win.

[42 : 05] Because they're out of sync with the Arche and the Telos. And only that which is in sync is going to win with me.

So don't be afraid. That's the book. All right. Now, does that bless you?

Hopefully. Now, if John were here, he'd say, there are going to be some scary times.

You go around those seals. You go around those trumpets. You go around those bulls. There are going to be some scary times. But you remember how I packaged the whole thing or how Jesus packaged the whole thing. There's no surprise where this is going.

He wins. Now, I want to talk about this diagram, this chiasm. Can I erase this now?

[43 : 10] I noticed a number of you took pictures of it. I'll sign for a donation to World Vision. Right, Ken?

That's where the donations are supposed to go. Okay. Okay. If you were here last Sunday, I talked a little bit about chiasm. And I hope I... That was audacious to do in a sermon.

It was just audacious to do that sermon anyway. Okay. And I mentioned that most Westerners think in a straight line. So, we have one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven.

And we assume then that everything is building to this end. This is where the sentence and the logic is going to go. But in the Middle Eastern, you have this chiasm.

You think in an inverted V way. I understand. I've been reading a lot about chiasm. And there's some neurologists who say that the human brain is constructed chiastically.

[44 : 16] This is how we think. This is why we like music that starts at the same place and ends at the same place. That's very pleasant to the brain. And the emotional moment usually comes before the end.

And the song wraps around. Movies are like that. The best movies don't end... Don't shut off at the climax. It's somewhere earlier. And then there's some more that comes with it.

So, it's all chiasm. So, I think then the revelation of Jesus Christ is put together this way. And you have it in front of you then. And I said it's built around this word open.

Particularly here, 4.1. And then 11.19. Oops, I did that wrong, didn't I?

I meant to say... Yeah. This is 1.9. 4.1. 11.19. 15.15, I think.

[45 : 19] And 19.11. And this is the prologue and this is the epilogue. Now, the value of this is then that this helps you understand the burden of a document.

The burden is... Well, he's going to envelope it with what we just talked about. The beginning and the end. But the burden of the book is going to be in this section here. In the fifth window of Windows 96.

And that's brought out in the fact that... You can see... I think I bolded the word overcome. Can you see that on your sheet? In this window, the 1.9.

Jesus is in the middle. Clothed with a robe. Eyes of a flame. His mouth is sharp to his sword. There's seven messages here. And seven times overcome. To the one who overcomes, I will give. Now, notice down in this other section that couples it.

So, you've got a whole bunch of overcome here. Seven times. Here, now you have... They overcame. And now, all the blessings promised in the seven messages are being experienced here.

[46 : 32] Overcome and you will. Overcome and you will. Overcome and you will. Oh, no, actually. Overcome and I will. Overcome and I will. Overcome and I will give you. I will give you. Give you. Now, they overcame. And this is now what he's giving them. And the other time that you hear the word overcome is here.

They overcame by the blood of the lamb, the word of their testimony, and not loving their lives unto death. So, when something's put together chiastically, it's this way of saying, pay attention to the structure.

I'm going to lead you to my greatest burden. And my greatest burden is that you will be able to overcome. So, also, the value of chiasm is you can memorize a book more clearly.

Maybe not every word, but you will now be able to, if you just study that, you'll be able to just know where you are in the book of Revelation. And know what window you're in and how to read it correctly.

All right. We've got some time for some questions. It's this daring thing to do now. And then I have a way to end in a little while.

[47 : 42] We'll end before 12th so you can get on with this beautiful day. All right. I'll tell you what we'll do. Because this is a big, intimidating crowd.

Earlier on, I had you turn to each other and say, what's the best thing you've heard this morning? Now, why don't you just turn to each other and say, what question would you like to ask?

Okay. Let's get the question pumped here. What question? You'll discover probably similar. So, what question would you like to ask? One or two questions.

And then we'll start with some questions. Why don't you answer that if you thought you were a friend of mine? Or do you have a friend of mine? Well, I'll start with some questions. Let's get to the next question. Let's get to the next question. What a little bit. What a little bit. Is that something that really works? Yeah? Yeah? Okay.